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Wm. R. Acton
Paper*

ACTON'S IMPROVEMENTS

ON

The Tailor's Transfer;

OR,

A COMPLETE DEMONSTRATION OF THE SCIENCE OF

GARMENT CUTTING.

BY

Wm. R. Acton & Co.

No. 732 Chestnut Street, S. E. corner of Eighth,

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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1862.

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INTRODUCTION.

IN presenting this work to the trade, we do so with the full and certain conviction of its superiority, it being our crowning effort, and the triumph of fifteen years devotion and labor for the perfection of a system of actual measurement, adapted to all the requirements of the profession. The success of our former works is proved beyond controversy, by the fact of their almost universal adoption by ~~the~~ the most prominent tailors on this continent, who would on no consideration exchange them for any others now in use. We offer this to your careful and candid consideration, void of all invidious allusions to other plans or methods, many of which doubtless have their merits and adherents. The fundamental principles embodied in this work, are clear in their conception, and the method complete in its consummation. The instrument being so simple, and at the same time so perfect in its construction as to be susceptible of no further improvement, the entire arrangement as set forth in the following details are based on purely common sense principles. We counsel nothing to be done, without giving a substantial reason for so doing. In the perusal of this work, will be found many important principles and suggestions, not met with in any work heretofore published either in Europe or America. Without subjecting our readers to the annoyance of a long and tedious introduction, we submit it to them, in the full confidence of its being received, and appreciated as its merits deserve.

DIRECTIONS FOR APPLYING THE INSTRUMENT TO THE BODY.

It is important to have the Measuring Instrument properly adjusted to the Body.

This is done by bringing it close under the left arm from the front, while you bring the long strap horizontally from one armpit to the other, passing it round in front of the right arm to the short strap on the shoulder, where you will buckle it as tight as the client wishes his coat to fit.

See that the brass plate, on which are placed the upper and lower pivots, is perpendicular with the front of the arm, and that the strap comes up close under the arm, without caring whether the seye reaches there or not.

DIRECTIONS FOR TAKING THE MEASURE.

1. Measure round the Breast.

2. " " Waist.

Now apply the instrument as above directed, and as represented on figs. A and B, Plate 1.

3. Measure from one to two.

4. Continue to 3, or natural Waist.

5. " 4, length of Waist.

6. " 5, " Skirt.

7. Find measure on the strap at 2.

8. " " " " 1.

9. Bring the measure from the upper pivot over the most prominent part of the shoulder to 2.

10. Bring the measure from the upper pivot over the lower point of shoulder to 6 on the strap.

11. Length of waist, in front.

12. Measure from lower pivot to 2.

13. " " " " 3.

14. " " " " 4.

You are now done with the instrument in taking measures for a dress, frock, sack, or overcoat.

15. Measure from the centre of Back to the shoulder joints for width of Back.

16. Continue to the Elbow.

17. " " Wrist.

18. Measure round the Elbow.

19. " " Wrist or hand.

NOTE.—For drafting Military Coats, take the following additional measures: Measure from lower pivot to bottom of stock, and around Neck.

For an over-coat or sack, a measure must be taken round the Hips, and use as hereafter directed.

Fig A



Fig B



Application of the tape measure in drafting

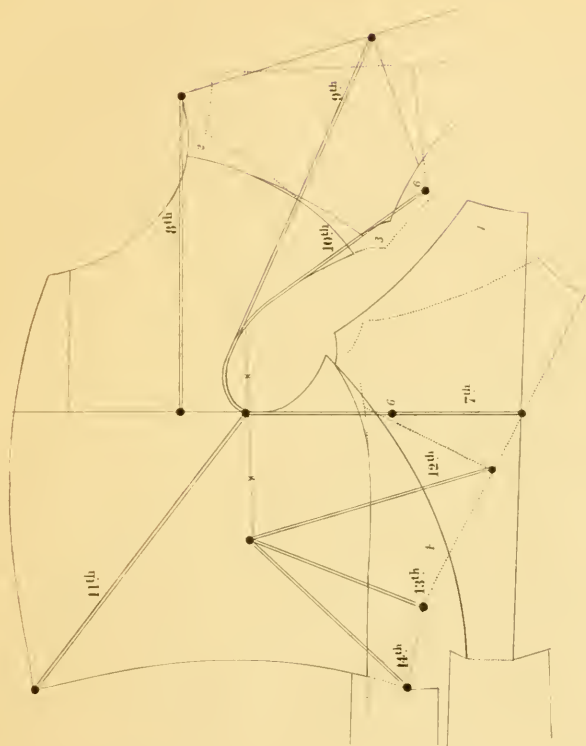


FIGURE No. 1.—PLATE III. Back of Dress or Frock Coat.

Line A. Edge of cloth. Apply the measure from the starting point 1; continue to length of waist, and extreme length of coat. Project lines B and C at right angles with line A. Go out from line A on line B two inches, to point 4; thence to point 1, draw line D. Apply your third and fourth measures on this line, from point 1 to points 2 and 3, for depth of scye and natural waist. From point 2, project line E, at right angles with line D. Apply the seventh measure from point 2 to point 8, on line E. (Whilst applying this measure, mark point 6, where the tenth measure terminates, on the strap.) Then apply the fifteenth measure, from point 2 to point 7; thence draw line H, for width of back. From point 1 to point 8, draw line F. Point 9, at junction with H and F, is the centre of back scye. The width of back at the neck, the back scye, and waist, are governed by fashion or taste, as are curves I, J, and K.

Line G is raised about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from point 1, at junction with line I.

FIGURE No. 2.—PLATE III. Forepart of Dress or Frock Coat.

Lay Back No. 1 on cloth, as seen in diagram, so as to get the forepart out to the best advantage. Then mark the back scye and upper portion of side seam by the back, in order to keep the correct position. Then project line A, which is a continuation of line E, of the back. From point 2, apply your seventh measure on this line for point 1, (which is the upper pivot); continue out to point 4, being half the circumference of the breast, as given by measure No. 1. From point 1 to point 3, is one-fourth the seventh measure. Draw line F at right angles with line A, above and below. Go down on line F, from point 1 to point 2, six inches, for the lower pivot. (Which points occupy the same relative position on the cloth that the pivots on the measuring instrument do, when applied to the body.)

Project lines B and C upward, at right angles with line A. Apply the eighth measure, from point 3 to point 1, of the back, for length of shoulder strap. Project line I at right angles with line B, (which is one-half the distance from point 3 to point 1, and designated by point 5.) Continue line F of the back to point 1, the upper pivot: this line gives the upper point of side seam. Form curve G as per diagram, extending the curve front of line F about three-quarters of an inch, to allow for seams. Lay point 1, of back, (as seen in position No. 2,) to line B. Then apply ninth measure, (as seen in plate 2,) moving the back right or left, as this measure may require, allowing $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch for seams; while there, mark curve D by the back. Curve E is obtained by application of the tenth measure, (as seen in plate 2,) from point 1 to point 6 of the back, (position 3,) allowing $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch for shoulder seam; then form curve H, as per diagram.

Apply the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth measures, as per Plate 2, and bring the back in accordingly, (as seen in position 4,) and form curve M. Apply eleventh measure for length in front. While the back is in this position, apply measure No. 2, for size round the waist, adding one inch for seams and making up. From point 4, on line A, go out three inches, for turn of breast; also go out on line C one inch. Go up two inches from lower point of side seam on curve M, and project line O to point 6. Then form curves N, O, P, and K, as per diagram.

NOTE.—Line Q is placed on forepart as a guide in getting the spring of a Dress-coat Skirt, and is drawn from star (*) to the lower point of side seam. The star is situated midway between upper point of side seam and line F.

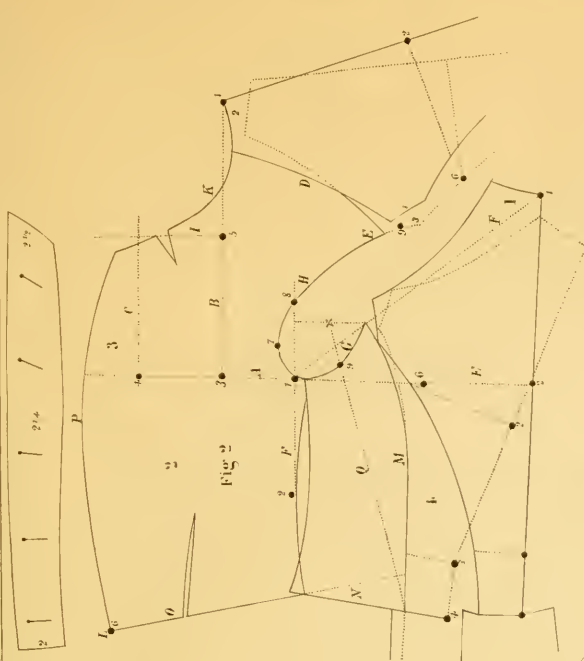
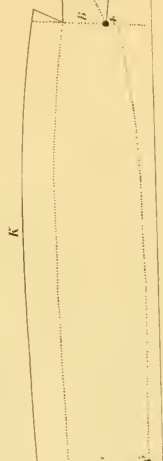
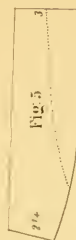
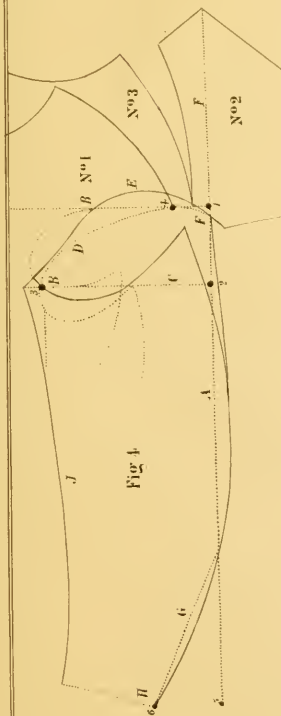


FIGURE No. 3.—PLATE III. Frock-Coat Skirt.

Line A, which is the base line, is drawn about an inch and a-half from the edge of cloth, to allow for turning in. Line B is drawn at right angles with line A. Go out on this line from point 1 to point 2, the width of forepart at the bottom, allowing for width of lappell, and about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch fullness; then draw line C at right angles with line A, from point 2. Go up from point 2 to point 3 one-fourth the net measure of the lower portion of forepart, without the lappell, to point 3. Thence to point 1 draw line D. Lay the side-body on line D, as represented, and draw curve E, giving it the same inclination as a continuation of the side seam, adding one and a-half inches for plait.

For the length, take that of the back skirt, from the hip line; put it all round from the waist, and thus form curve F.

FIGURE 4.—PLATES III and IV. Sleeve.

NOTE.—In drafting this Sleeve, it is necessary to have the forepart cut out, as it will be seen that it is drafted by the scye.

In drafting this Sleeve, the first thing is to measure the circumference and diameter of the scye. For the circumference, apply the back to the lower point of shoulder, (as in position 3;) then measure round the scye. Apply half this measure from centre of back scye, at point 9, along curve H, to find point 7. For diameter—measure across the scye, from point 8 to 9. Draw line A at sufficient distance from edge of cloth, to admit of the round.

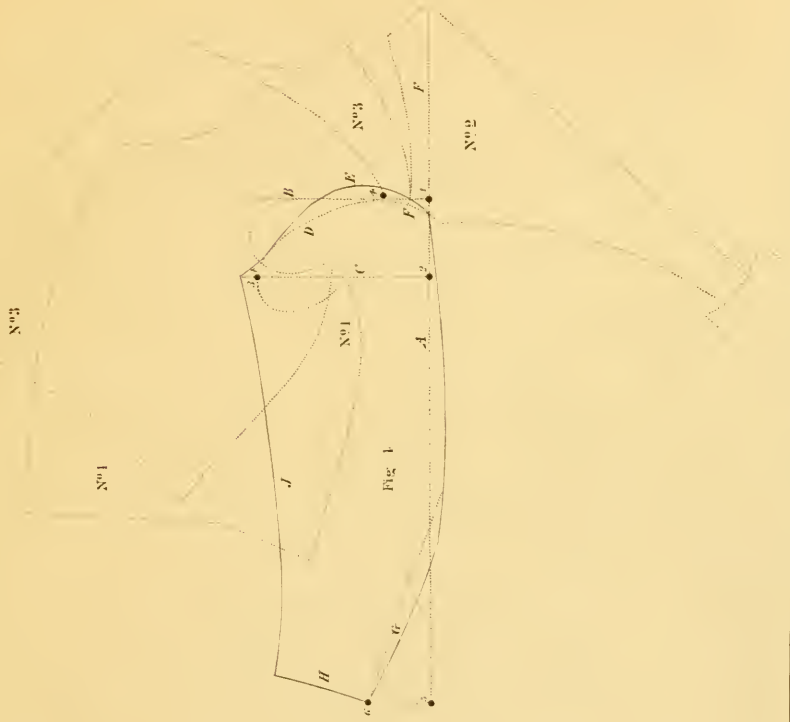
Project line B from point 1, at right angles with line A. Go from point 1 to point 2 the diameter of the scye. Thence project line C, at right angles with line A; go out on this line one half the circumference of the scye, to point 3. Lay point 7, of forepart, on point 3, and the lower point of shoulder to point 4, on line B, (as represented by forepart No. 1.) While in this position, mark curve D by the scye.

Place line F, of the back, on a line with A, (as seen in position No. 2.) Then bring curve H of the scye to rest on line B, (as seen in position No. 3.) While the back and forepart remain in this position, mark curve F.

You now have a sleeve that would fit the scye, provided you wished to sew it in perfectly plain. But as the present fashion requires from 2 to 3 inches fullness, you will mark curve E, according to style, as seen on draft. Apply your measure across the back, and continue to elbow and wrist, for length of sleeve. Go in from point 5 to 6 about three inches, for bend of sleeve; thence to the elbow draw line G. Project line H at right angles with line G. Apply the elbow and wrist measures, and form line I, as per diagram.

The under side sleeve at top is about half the circumference of the scye, and marked according to draft.

Collar and Lappells are cut according to the patterns; the width being given in inches.



FIGURES 6, 7 and 8.—PLATE V. Surtout or Over-Coat.

The difference existing between Over-Coats and Dress Coats, comes from the last being worn single, while over-coats, also termed great coats, or top coats, are worn over another, and, therefore, must differ, not only in style, but also in size.

Back Figure 6 is increased in every respect. All its lengths are more; that of the waist being from one to two inches, while the extreme length is increased from four to eight inches.

The width is also increased half an inch, (as seen by line D.) The back is otherwise drafted as an ordinary back, always working from the dotted line, but cutting by the solid line D.

The Forepart, figure 7, is laid down in the usual way. The dotted lines and curves represent the Dress Coat, while the solid ones represent the difference made for an over-coat, a-half inch being added across the shoulder, and the scye hollowed out, so that it will measure an inch and a-half more. The breast and waist measures, being taken over the coat, are applied accordingly.

The Lappell is all of a piece, with the forepart, but is sometimes cut separately.

Sleeve, figure 8, is drafted to suit the scye, according to the principle heretofore laid down. The only difference being the absence of the fore-arm seam, as in this case.

FIGURES 9 and 10.—PLATE V. Straight or Loose Sack.

Back, No. 9. The dotted lines will show the difference between this and an ordinary coat.

The width of waist at line B, and bottom at line C, is the same as width of back between the shoulders.

FIGURE 10.—PLATE V. Forepart.

The shoulder and breast is drafted as an ordinary coat, except that the lappell is all of a piece, with the forepart. But one of the balance measures is used for the side seam, which is the thirteenth, taken from the lower pivot, and when applied, will bring the back in, as represented by the dotted lines at point 6. The side seam will then be sprung out to point 7, (which is the difference between the half circumference of the breast and waist measures,) as for example: A person measuring 36 breast and 30 waist, one-half the breast measure would be 18 inches, the waist 15; the difference would be 3 inches, the amount required to go out from point 6 to point 7, in this case. It should be observed that the same quantity should be added from the dotted line of the dress-coat on the front, in order to give it a perfect balance.

The sleeve, drafted as in figure 8.

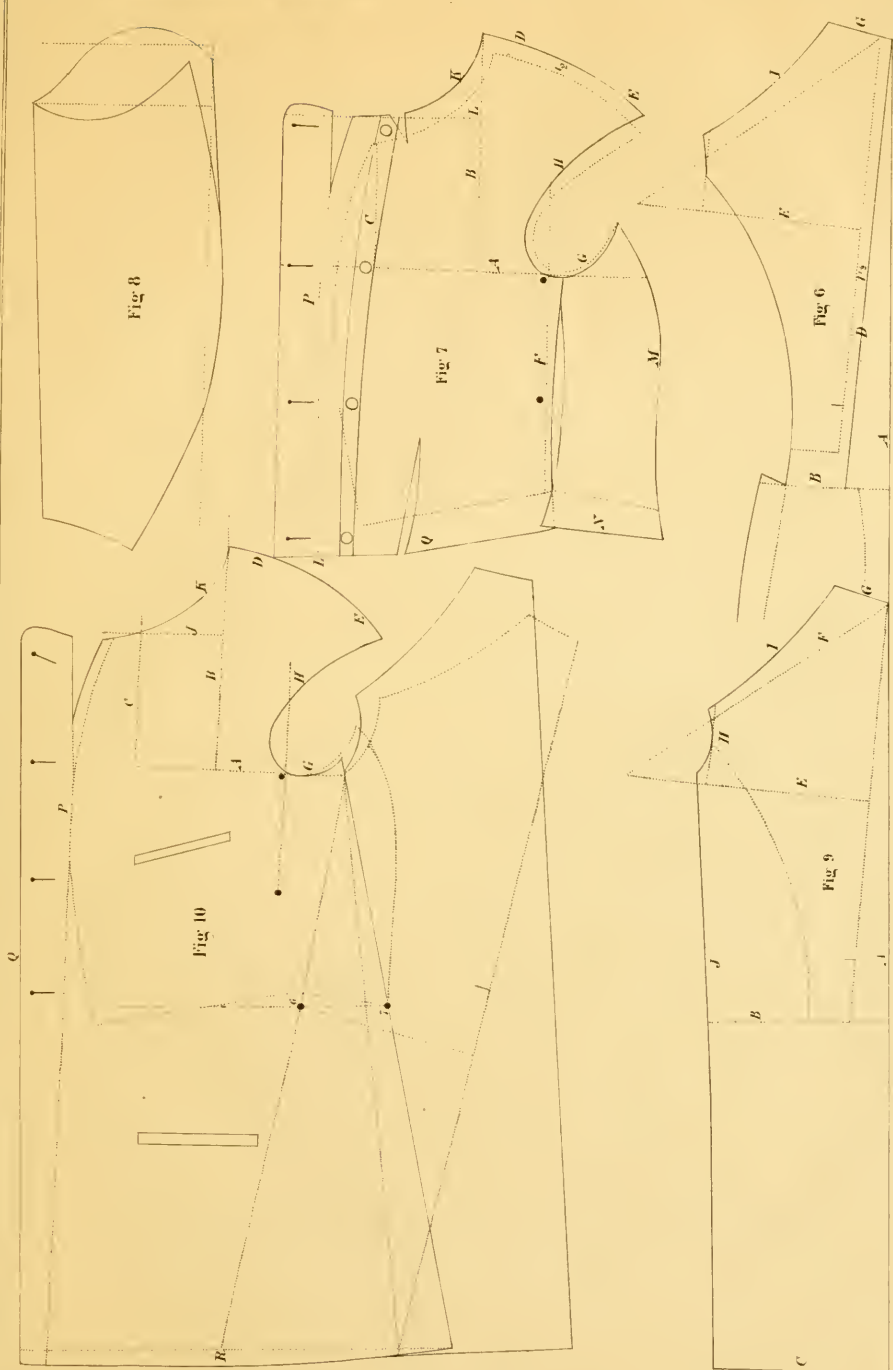


FIGURE 11.—PLATE VI. Dress-Coat Skirt.

Draw line A one inch and a-half from edge of cloth, for pleet; get the length by the back skirt. Thence bring line Q, of the forepart, as seen, on a line with A; from this junction project line B to the lower point of forepart, and form curve C, and lines D and E, as per diagram.

FIGURE 12.—PLATE VI. Frock Sack.

The back and upper portion of forepart, as well as the side body, are drafted on the same principles as those represented in figures 1 and 2, of Plate 3. The skirt and front of forepart, as also the lappell, are of a piece. The line across the waist is continued in for height of back part of skirt. Then lay the side body on this line, as seen in model, and while there, draw your line for spring of skirt on a range with the side seam. Form your bottom curve by the back skirt. The pockets may be put in the side or pleet, together with an outside breast pocket. The sleeve as heretofore explained.

FIGS. 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17.—PLATE VI. Double and Single-Breasted Vests.

Figures 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, Plate 6, are double and single-breasted Vests, with collars attached. The measures taken for these Vests are, the breast, waist, length, and seye measure.

FIGURE 15.—PLATE VI. Forepart.

Line A, edge of cloth. Come in from line A one-fourth the breast measure, and draw line B parallel with line A. Make the bottom of the cloth on line B, a pivot, from which sweep curve C, from line A to B, less the width you wish to make the top of back. Go down on line A from curve C, one half the seye measure; then draw line D at right angles with line A. Come up from line D, on line A, one-sixth the seye measure, and square in line E. Come in on this line one-sixth the seye measure, thence form curve G. Line F is one-half the distance from line A to B, less one-half inch nearer B. Then draw line F to a junction with curve C, for shoulder point. Come in on line D from line B, one and a half to two inches. Thence to the bottom of vest, draw line H. Go up on line A from two to three inches and form curve K, and neck, as per draft.

FIGURE 16.—PLATE VI. Back.

Line L is a continuation of line D, of the forepart. Project line Q from lower point of side seam from line A, and go out on these lines one-fourth the breast measure, adding three-quarters of an inch. Thence draw line M for centre of back. Go out on line L, from line A, one-fourth the seye measure. Then draw line N above and below to a junction with line O, making this junction a pivot. Thence sweep curve P from front point of shoulder for height of back. (For a round shouldered person it will be necessary to increase the length of back.) Come in from line M, on curve P, the width of back at the top, which is generally from three to three and a half inches. Thence to a junction of lines D and F, draw line O. Form curve R, as per diagram, and draft collar, figures 17, as per model.

FIGURES 13 and 14.—PLATE VI. Double-Breasted Vest.

Figures 13 and 14 represent a double-breasted rolling-collar vest. In this vest you will come in from line H, from two to two and a half inches, for lappell, and increase the length of collar accordingly.

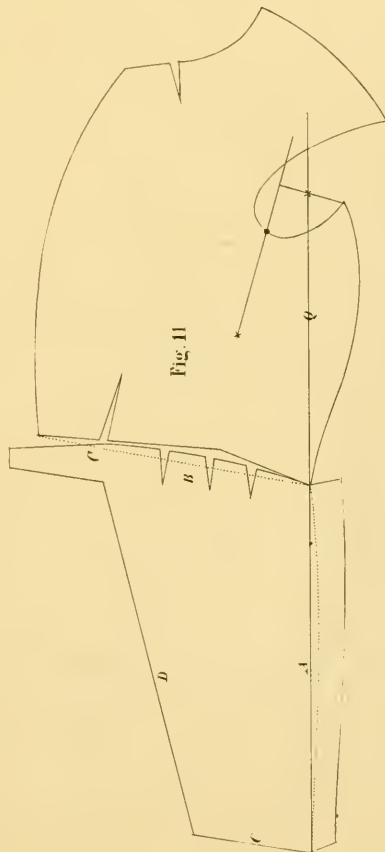
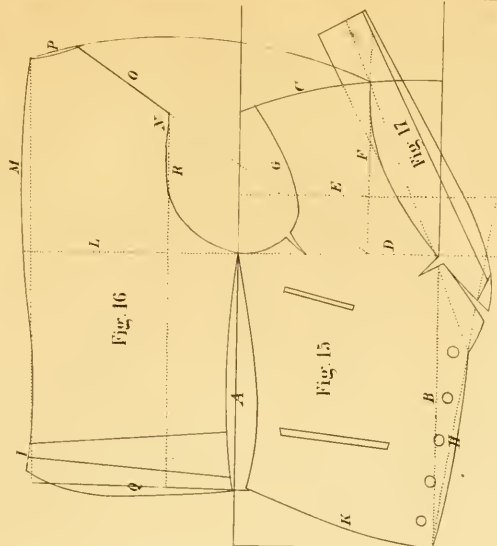
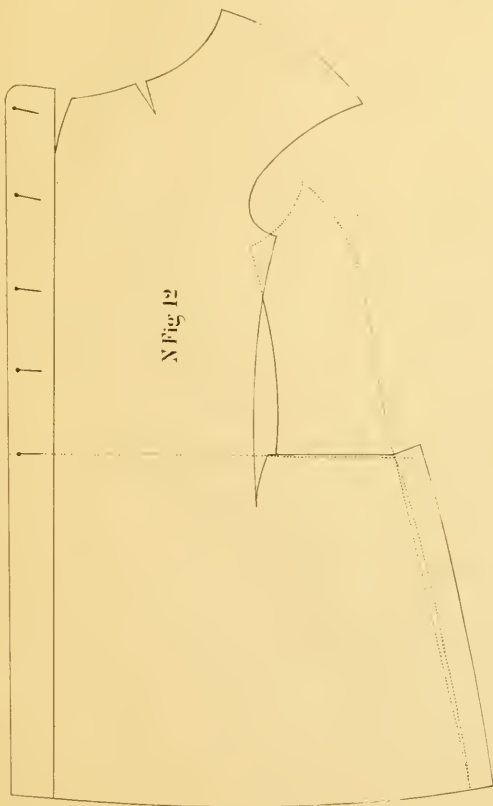
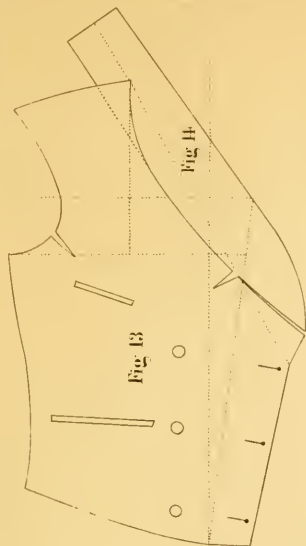


FIGURE 18.—PLATE VII. Overcoat.

The forepart and skirt of this coat are of a piece ; the body being drafted, as described in figure 7. It will be seen from the model, that the slash under the arm is wider, and extends below the waist. The amount taken out of this slash should be added to the side seam, as shown by the solid curve. The net measure being the dotted one, as it would appear without the slash.

The side seam should be cut half an inch shorter than the back curve, and stretched out from the notch down ; the spring of skirt being on a range with side seam.

FIGURE 19.—PLATE VII. Collar.

Figure 19, the collar, is drafted, as seen in model.

For the back and sleeve of this coat, use figures 6 and 8, of plate 5.

FIGURES 20 and 21.—PLATE VII. Paletot or Business Coat.

The back, figure 20, is the same as described in figure 6, plate 5.

The body, figure 21, is drafted as an ordinary single coat, with the exception of the side body and slash, which are regulated according to the directions for figure 18. The forepart and skirt also being of the piece.

FIGURE 22.—PLATE VII. Vest with Collar cut on.

The gusset may be set in at the shoulder seam, or added to the back. To draft this vest, select a scale corresponding with the breast measure.

Figures 23 and 24 are also drafted by a scale.

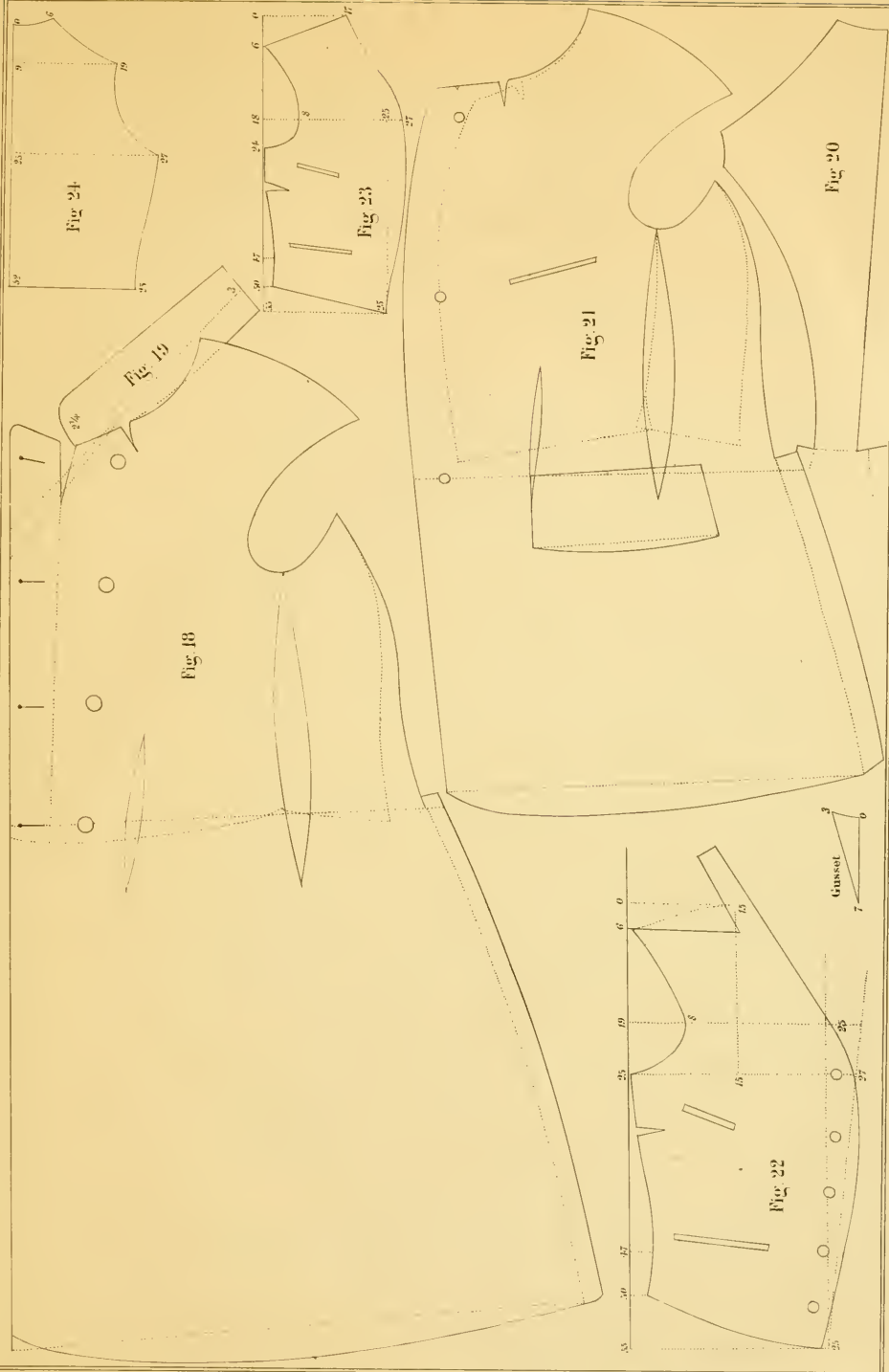


FIGURE 25.—PLATE VIII. Forepart of Rolling Collar Vest.

This Vest is drafted by the Tape measure, as are figures 15 and 16, but differs in some respect as will be seen. Lines A, B, H, E, F, and D, and curve C, are obtained in the same manner as in figure 15, plate 6. From point 3 to point 4, is one half the scye measure. From point 4 to 5, and from point 5 to 6, is one-sixth the scye measure. From point 12 to 11, is from two and a half to three inches. Thence to point 1 draw line K. Apply waist measure on lower portion of forepart, and form curve J accordingly.

The collar is drafted according to model.

FIGURE 26.—PLATE VIII. Back.

Lines L, M, N, and Q, are obtained in the same manner as described in figures 15 and 16, of plate 6. Measure on forepart from point 4 to point 10, and apply it on line M of back; from point 3 to point 4, for length of back. Should the client be round shouldered, this length must be increased. From point 4 to point 5, is from three to three and a half inches. From point 2 to point 6, on line M of back is the same as from point 4 to point 3, of forepart. Then form curves O, R, and P, as per draft.

FIGURES 27, 28, and 29.—PLATE VIII. Garrick.

This garment is drafted by a scale corresponding with the breast measure; the length and width being given in numbers. The length may be increased if desired. Otherwise it is drafted according to model.

FIGURE 30.—PLATE VIII. Long and Short Gaiter.

Select scale corresponding with the seat measure.

The shaded part of figure 30, Plate 8, is a model for long gaiters, buttoning straight on the line A, fly being left on the under part at centre line.

The measure for long gaiters are:

Full length; full width at top; full width at calf and ankle; oblique width, round of the foot, and bottom width.

The white part of fig. 30, is a model of short gaiters. They button on the instep and must be tight round the foot.

The measures are:

Length, width between points 5 and 19, then between 6 and 20, afterwards the round of foot between 20 and 20, and lastly the whole width between 5 and 29.

NOTE.—For this style of draft, we are indebted to an old work, by Compaing, of Paris.

Fig. 28

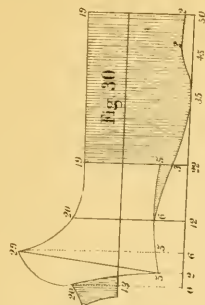


Fig. 29

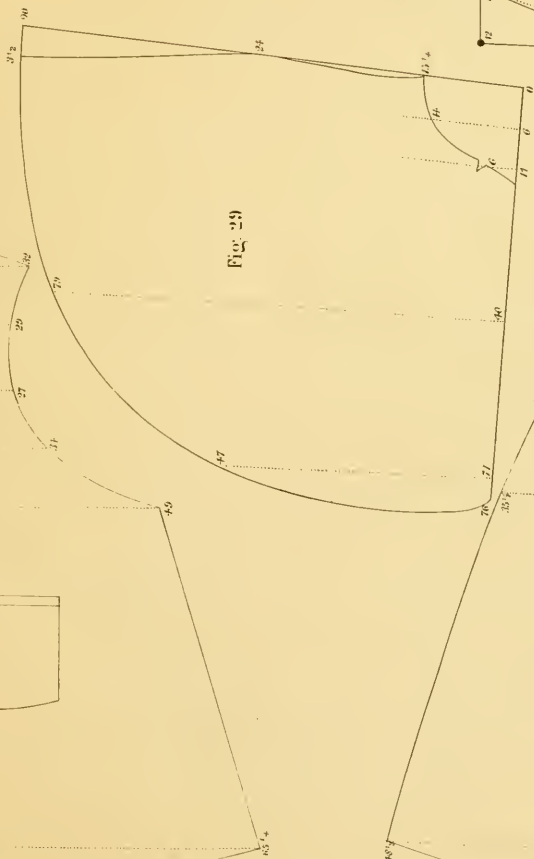


Fig. 27

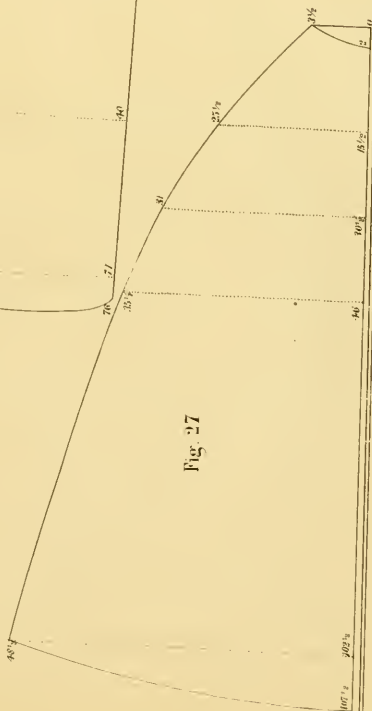


Fig. 26

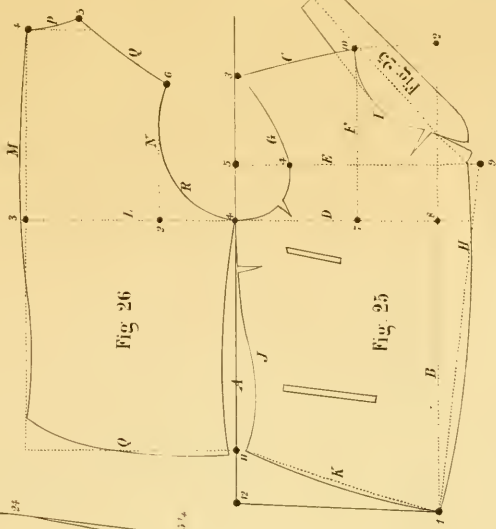


Fig. 25



FIGURES 31, 32, and 33.—PLATE IX. Short Sack.

This style of Sack makes a neat and graceful business Coat. They are drafted by a scale corresponding with the breast measure. Or may be drafted by the tape line, on the principle laid down in the foregoing figures.

FIGURE 34.—PLATE IX. Trowsers.

These Trowsers are drafted by a scale corresponding with the seat measure, which is taken in the usual way, *viz.*, around the lower portion of the body at the thickest part.

The other measures are taken as usual.

Go out from edge of cloth at top and bottom twenty-two numbers of the scale, (which is one fourth the seat measure) to find line A. Come up on line A, for the crotch eighty points of the scale, for the top one hundred and four points. From these points draw lines E and B, at right angles with line A. Come in on line B twenty points of the scale, on line E twenty-two points; and on curve D at the bottom twenty points, and form line C. Go out on line E from point 80 to point 5, five numbers, and continue to point 8, eight numbers, form curves D, F, G, H, I and J, as per model; this completes the forepart.

For the back part: continue line E from point 80 to point 12, twelve numbers of the scale. Come in from point 104, on line B, four numbers, and continue thirty-two numbers, to the point so designated; and from eighty, on line E, and equal distance form curve O. At the bottom come in twenty-six points. From point 4, on line B, go up eight numbers. Draw line M from point 8 of forepart, to point 8 of back, and form curve L, to intersect J, as per model. Form curves K, N, and O, as per draft.

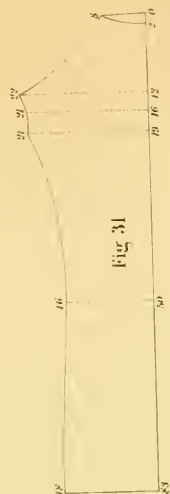
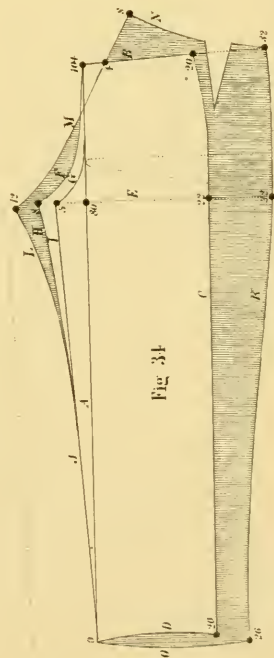
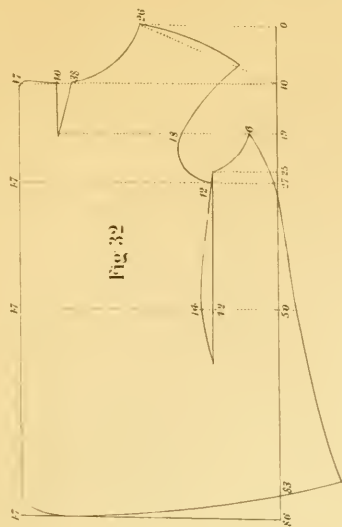
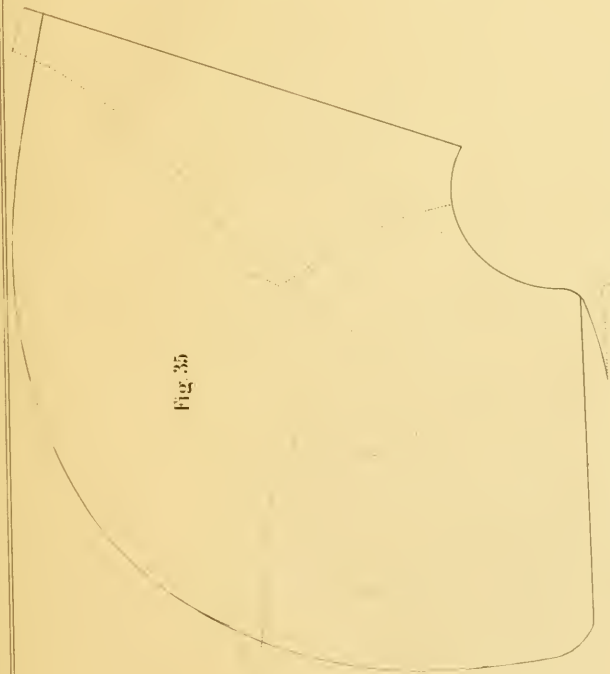
This draft can also be made by a tape measure, *to wit*: Line A is one-fourth the seat measure, from edge of cloth. From O to 80, is the measure of the inside seam. To point 104 is the balance of the outside measure. From 104 to 20 is one-fourth the waist. From 80 to 22 is one-fourth the seat measure. From O to 20, at the bottom, is from 6 to 8 inches. From point 80 to points 5, 8 and 12, is obtained as follows: for example, (take the seat measure and the measure of the thigh at the thickest part, horizontally. Then subtract the thigh measure from that of the seat, say 38 seat, and 22 thigh. The half of which would be 19 and 11, the difference being 8 inches. This is divided between the fork of the forepart and back, according to figures 5, 8 and 12. The excess being given to the back part.) From point 104 to point 4, is about one and a half inches, and from point 4 to point 8, three inches. From point 4 to point 32, is the balance of waist measure, not disposed of in the forepart, allowing for the slash and seams. Apply the hip measure, as seen by dotted lines, and add from one and a half to three inches more than the measure taken.

The width at the bottom is regulated by style or taste. Form curves according to model.

FIGURE 35.—PLATE IX. Cape.

This figure is given to show the principle upon which a Cape may be regulated to suit any style or kind of Coat.





OBSERVATIONS.

The figures, on Plate 2, representing the application of the Instrument and measures to the body, will require but little comment; the simplicity of the arrangement at once presenting itself, by reference to the preceding explanations. To insure success, it is very necessary that the measures should be taken with uniformity, in regard to their tension, and applied with care and correctness.

We will next call your attention to Plate 3, Forepart of Dress or Frock Coat. In this fig. we wish you to notice particularly the upper point of the side seam—a point of great importance—the plan of obtaining which, is one of our greatest improvements. To some, this may appear insignificant; yet, upon examination, it will be found that it is of vast importance to the proper set of a Coat, and when not observed, will cause the best cut Coat otherwise to wrinkle under the arm and swing off at the waist; the back will, at the same time, have the appearance of being too short for the side body—all of which is the effect of this seemingly unimportant point. We will now explain the cause and its remedy:

When the side body is cut to range with the back scye, there is no allowance left on the upper point of side body for seams, and in making up, you are, of necessity, compelled to drop the back from the position in which it was drafted, to make up the deficiency; which process raises the forepart a-half inch, thereby shortening the depth of the scye the same amount, causing the evil effects before mentioned. Whereas, when the point is lengthened, as per draft, the back, when joined to the forepart, does not change the position of either portion, as in the other case, leaving them, when made up, in the same position as in the draft, the scye coming to its proper place, and the line for the bottom of scye preserved, without alteration from the elevating or depressing of either portion of the coat, from want of space for seams.

It will be seen that our principle for obtaining the upper shoulder point, is self-regulating, giving the position equally as true for a crooked as a straight man, as also the upper point of the neck, on the back; in fact, every point varies itself to suit the subject measured.

The idea has been advanced, that no rule would cut a garment to fit every person. But we do contend that this rule, properly used, will itself give all the variations required to fit any human creature. It is self-regulating and certain, and a plan failing to accomplish this, is unworthy to be called a system.

In this plate, we also give the draft of a sleeve on purely scientific principles.

We call your especial attention to it. All systems give a draft for a sleeve, and each and every one is based upon the same erroneous principle; the evil effects of which often present themselves after they have been put in; the Coat being a complete fit before their addition, clearly showing where the fault existed; and when the Coat is not entirely spoiled, it generally crawls across the muscles of the arm, or from the front or back point of the sleeve. In this draft, we have effectually remedied this evil, being able, by the principle laid down in this work, to cut a sleeve that will fit any seye whatever, without detriment to the general fit of the garment. This plan is entirely new and original, never before having been presented to the trade; in fact, it is the only principle ever set forth that was capable of being clearly, scientifically, and satisfactorily, demonstrated. It, moreover, has the benefit of great simplicity, being easily comprehended. It is by far the most important improvement in this work, and will be of great benefit to the trade. Considering the amount of Coats yearly ruined by the want of a proper plan to regulate the sleeves that would otherwise be stylish, graceful and elegant. It will be observed that the back and forepart bear the same relation to the sleeve, when drafted on the counter, that they do when the garment is finished and on the wearer, thereby proving the correctness of the principle.

We are more extended in our remarks on this plate, in consequence of the whole fundamental principle of the system being therein involved.

We furnish in connection with this work, a set of scales, which are simply a division of the breast or hip measures, in forty eight equal parts. You will notice that some of these drafts are laid off by a scale, viz.: Vests, Pants, Sacks, Garrieks, and Gaiters. The Pants and Vests, although drafted by a scale, are explained so that the same draft can be procured by the inch measure, so that the cutter, while drafting by the scales, will appreciate their merits, from his knowledge of the fact, that their foundation is actual measurement.

Persons often say, we use the proof measure in our division rule, and it must come right. But let it be remembered that we draft by the proof measures, thereby proving as we draft.

Whatever may be said in favor of rules regulated by a system of division, whether from long use and endearment, or actual belief in their merits, it must still be admitted that they are entirely without merit, only as they approximate to that only sure method—actual measurement.

There are certain styles of garment that must be cut by divisions; for instance—Cloaks, Garrieks, and loose garments generally. A scale is convenient, if we wish to increase or reduce a pattern: this is done by first throwing the pattern into a square, then apply your scale, and number the points accordingly. This process will enable you to draft a garment of the same style by the scale, either larger or smaller, as may be required.



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